

# Théa invests in La Rochelle for a brand-new manufacturing facility

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Théa has its headquarters and R&D centre in the Brézet business park in Clermont-Ferrand.  
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Théa group based in Clermont-Ferrand has announced plans to invest €10 million for a new flagship production facility in La Rochelle, and further on-site expansion is projected.

Théa, which has its headquarters and R&D centre in the Brézet business park in Clermont-Ferrand, will have a brand-new manufacturing facility up and running in La Rochelle within three years. The foundation stone was laid on Thursday 29 June, with delivery of the new facility scheduled for 2024, after which ANSM, the French medicines and healthcare products regulatory agency, will run all the requisite tests, checks and audits ready for go-live production in 2026.

## Future-proofed for further expansion

The project is part of the group's strategy to replace its existing unit called 'Bénac', which employs 13 people operating premises on lease in nearby Périgny. The new facility, in La Rochelle's Technocéan business park, will have 1,700m<sup>2</sup> to work with (marking a big step up from the ≈500m<sup>2</sup> available today), as the build project is designed to accommodate future expansion.

For Théa, this new unit represents a 10-million-euro investment. It will continue to manufacture an ocular insert used with cataract surgery: a sterile micro-capsule to dilate the pupil ready for surgery. The new facility is projected to serve as the manufacturing centre for the whole of Europe, and its workforce could ultimately more than double.

### **Made in France (and in Europe)**

Théa proudly continues to make or contract-manufacture 70% of its products in France and the remaining 30% in Europe. Based in Clermont-Ferrand, the Théa group directly owns two production sites: Farmila Théa, outside Milan in Italy, which specializes in manufacturing and packaging preservative-free eye-drops and gels in vials and tubes; Bénac, which specializes in intraocular inserts used with cataract surgery.

The other Théa-brand products are made by French or European contract manufacturers and co-packers. One of our go-to partners is Fareva, a group based in the Ardèche region of France and that acquired MSD's Mirabel site in Riom.

Jean-Frédéric CHIBRET, CEO of Théa, is delighted to have sealed this collaboration with the La Rochelle urban community, noting that “despite how hard it is for Made-in-France manufacturing to stay competitive in healthcare products, we at Théa have kept our headquarters and R&D here in France, and we continue to make 70% of our products in France (and 100% in Europe). That means we are contributing to our country's prosperity but also our country's health security”.

### **1,600 employees across the globe**

Théa specializes in products that support ophthalmic care and eye health. Théa was founded in 1994 by Henri Chibret, and is currently chaired by his nephew, Jean-Frédéric Chibret. Today Théa is present in 75 countries and has 35 affiliates around the world. Théa employs around 1,600 people, a third of which are based in France, mostly at the group's headquarters in Clermont-Ferrand. In 2022, Théa group posted consolidated revenues of €865M.